



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PHMC and Flagship Niagara League Announce U.S. Brig *Niagara* Sailing Season to End Early, Outline Plans for Repairs

The Flagship Niagara League will be issuing refunds to anyone who has already registered to sail on the ship

Harrisburg, PA - The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) and the Flagship Niagara League (FNL) regretfully announce that the remainder of the U.S. Brig *Niagara*'s 2023 sailing schedule is officially cancelled due to unforeseen propeller issues requiring a lengthy repair time.

Since learning of the loss of the starboard propeller that led to what was hoped to be a temporary suspension of the season last week, PHMC and FNL have been working together to resolve the matter. Throughout their deliberations, their utmost concern has been for the safety of visitors and staff and the preservation of the historic *Niagara*.

PHMC's decision to officially cancel the season was based on reviewing the detailed repair options and accompanying timelines provided by Captain William Sabatini, Executive Director and Fleet Captain of the Flagship Niagara League.

After reviewing all the options, PHMC has decided to replace the *Niagara*'s propellers with in-kind custom-fabricated propellers, saving money on repairs in the long run and allowing the ship to operate without undue stress to the engines. The variable-pitch propellers will take a minimum of 76 days to fabricate and install at a cost of approximately \$120,000.

"Canceling the remainder of the *Niagara*'s sailing season comes as great disappointment to PHMC, the Flagship Niagara League, our volunteers, and community supporters," said Melissa Mann, PHMC's Director of Historic Sites and Museums. "Our next step will be to sail the *Niagara* to shipyard to replace the propellers and install new generators as previously planned. While at the shipyard, a full survey of the ship's mechanical and maintenance needs will be conducted in order to develop a long-term maintenance and preservation plan to ensure many successful future sailing seasons. I commend the Flagship Niagara League and Erie Maritime Museum staff for their hard work and dedication in developing the best path forward for the *Niagara*."

The Flagship Niagara League will be contacting anyone who is registered to sail on the *Niagara* to issue refunds.

While the propellers are being fabricated and before the ship travels to shipyard in Cleveland for repairs, the U.S. Brig *Niagara* will be open for deck tours at the [Erie Maritime Museum](#) Wednesday through Saturday, 9:30 am to 5:00 pm, and Sundays, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm. To experience Erie's rich maritime history from the water, the Schooner [Lettie G. Howard](#) is operating daily as scheduled, weather permitting. For more information, call 833-FNL- SAIL (833-365-7245) or book online at sailfni.org/sail.

The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission is the official history agency of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Commission administers the [Erie Maritime Museum](#). Learn more by visiting [PHMC online](#) or following us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

The [Flagship Niagara League](#) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization, chartered to facilitate citizen participation aboard the U.S. Brig *Niagara*.

The *Lettie G. Howard* is owned by the South Street Seaport Museum and is operated as a programmatic collaboration between the South Street Seaport Museum and the Flagship Niagara League.

Media Contacts:

PHMC: Howard Pollman, 717-705-8639

Flagship Niagara League: Rebecca Grimaldi, 412-485-0152